

Message Text

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PAGE 01 CONAKR 00936 131429Z
ACTION AF-10

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R 130920Z MAY 78
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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4321
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AMEMBASSY DAKAR
AMEMBASSY FREETOWN
AMEMBASSY MONROVIA

C O N F I D E N T I A L CONAKRY 0936

STADIS//////////

E.O. 11652: XGDS-4
TAGS: SHUM, SREF, GV
SUBJECT: RETURN OF GUINEAN EXILES

REF: (A) STATE 103396, (B) CONAKRY 818

1. FURTHER TO REF B, GUINEAN OFFICIAL IN OFFICE OF MINISTER OF DOMAIN FOR INTERIOR, SECURITY AND JUSTICE REPORTS THAT AGREEMENT REACHED APRIL 14 WITH IVORY COAST PROVIDES FOR FREE CROSS-BORDER MOVEMENT OF GUINEANS LIVING IN ADJACENT AREAS BOTH SIDES OF THE BORDER. OTHER GUINEANS WANTING TO RETURN TO GUINEA WILL STILL HAVE TO SECURE DOCUMENTATION FROM GUINEAN AUTHORITIES, AS HAS BEEN THE CASE SINCE PRESIDENT TOURE'S AMNESTY OF EXILES LAST JULY. PURPOSE OF THIS DOCUMENTATION, GUINEAN OFFICIAL STATES, IS TO KEEP TRACK OF MOVEMENTS OF SUCH INDIVIDUALS, NOT TO CONTROL OR DISCOURAGE THEIR RETURN TO GUINEA. ACCORDING TO SOURCE, 19,000 SUCH DOCUMENTS HAD BEEN ISSUED UP TO MAY 12, 1978. GUINEAN RETURNEES, HE SAYS, HAVE COME WITH HOUSEHOLD EFFECTS, MOST OF THEM INTENDING TO
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REMAIN IF EXPERIENCE SHOWS THIS PRESENTS NO SPECIAL DIFFICULTIES. TWO-THIRDS OF RETURNEES ARE TRADERS (LARGELY FOULAH); AND THE REST ARE MOSTLY FARMERS, PLUS SOMETHING OVER A THOUSAND "INTELLECTUALS" -- STUDENTS UNABLE TO COMPLETE THEIR STUDIES ABROAD WHO WANT TO RETURN TO UNIVERSITY IN CONAKRY. SOURCE SAID TRADERS ARE OPERATING BACK AND FORTH ACROSS THE

BORDER, MANY OF THEM MAINTAINING BANK ACCOUNTS AND A
PIED-A-TERRA ABROAD WHILE THEY TEST THE WATERS IN
GUINEA.

2. COMMENT: THIS IS THE MOST SPECIFIC FIGURE WE HAVE
HEARD FOR THE NUMBER OF GUINEAN RETURNEES. THE SOURCE,
GIVEN HIS LOCATION IN THE GOVERNMENT, OUGHT TO BE ABLE
TO SPEAK WITH SOME AUTHORITY, AND WE ARE INCLINED TO
CREDIT HIS STATEMENT. AS HE MADE CLEAR, HE IS QUITE
AWARE THAT MANY IF NOT MOST GUINEAN RETURNEES COME
WITH RESERVATIONS AND REMAIN TO BE CONVINCED THAT THE
MORE RELAXED INTERNAL SECURITY CONTROLS, IMPROVED
CONSUMER GOODS SUPPLY AND MODERATELY ENCOURAGING
ECONOMIC OUTLOOK ARE HERE TO STAY. SOME HAVE UNDOUBTEDLY
ALREADY GONE BACK TO THEIR ADOPTED COUNTRIES FOR ONE
REASON OR ANOTHER, BUT IN VIEW OF UNIFORMLY POSITIVE
DEVELOPMENTS IN GUINEA DURING PAST SEVEN MONTHS, WE
BELIEVE MANY OF THOSE WHO HAVE DARED TO COME BACK ARE
CONTINUING TO REMAIN, UNCERTAIN BUT HOPEFUL. LACKING
ANY MORE SOLID FIGURE, WE WOULD THEREFORE BE INCLINED
TO PUT THE NUMBER OF GUINEAN RETURNEES SOMEWHERE
BETWEEN 17 AND 19 THOUSAND. THIS IS STILL A DROP IN
THE BUCKET COMPARED TO THE TOTAL RESIDING ABROAD, BUT
IT REPRESENTS SOME SIGNIFICANT MOVEMENT.
CROSBY

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